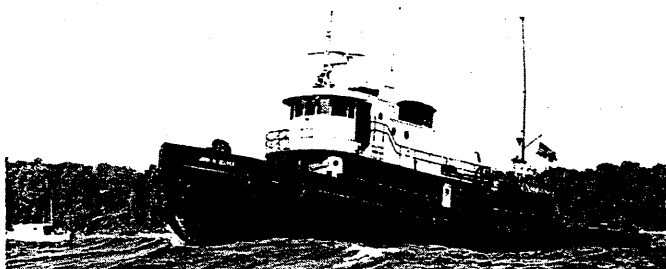


# **STH 57 ENUMERATION**

## **EXISTING BUSINESS**

## **SUPPORTIVE DOCUMENTATION**



# *Selvick* MARINE TOWING

CAPT. WM. C. SELVICK

67 East Maple  
Sturgeon Bay, Wis. 54235  
Phone 414/743-6016

July 26, 1996

Governor Tommy Thompson  
Chairman, Transportation Projects Commission  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
Room 115 East, State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Sir:

I am writing in support of the Highway 57 improvement project. I am the Vice-President of Selvick Marine Towing Corp which is a Marine Towing Company in Sturgeon Bay, WI.

We have been in business since 1970 and employ 20 employees. We provide towing services in the ports of Sturgeon Bay, Green Bay, Manitowoc and Milwaukee, WI along with ports in Cleveland, OH. This requires our employees to travel alot on Highway 57 to service these ports.

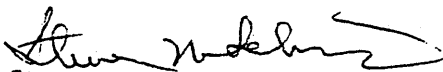
Highway 57 is the only route available and is a cause for great concern to us. This heavily traveled route is also the only way tourists come and go to Door County.

To have business traffic and tourist traffic operate safely from Sturgeon Bay to Green Bay daily, something must be done now.

For the good of the public and survival of the economic situation, please don't isolate Sturgeon Bay with outdated access roads. After reviewing all the statistics on this project, I hope you will agree with the conclusion that this is a must for Door County and for the State of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

SELVICK MARINE TOWING CORP.

  
Steven M Selvick  
Vice-President

SMS:s1

**RALPH F. HERLACHE**

Attorney at Law  
118 North Fourth Avenue  
Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin 54235

Telephone  
(414)743-6400

Facsimile  
(414)743-6670

July 22, 1996

Governor Tommy Thompson, Chairman  
Transportation Projects Commission  
Wisconsin Dep't of Transportation  
4802 Sheboygan Ave., Room 951  
Madison, WI 53705

Re: Hwy 57 Project

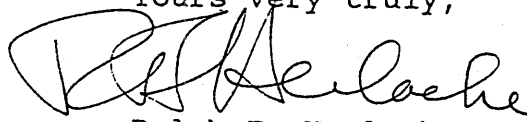
Dear Governor Thompson:

This is to express my strong support for the Hwy 57 from Dyckesville to Hwy 42 project. The traffic on that road, especially in the summer, but really all year long, is very heavy. I understand that your committee looks at the number of deaths on the road as a factor in determining whether a project needs immediate construction, but I think that you should also add into the mix the fact that much of the time traffic is moving at about 45 miles per hour because of the volume. At that speed, we just can't kill enough people to compete with some of the other top projects.

In addition to the above, it is essential to business in Door County that we have excellent access, not only for our tourist business, but for our manufacturing businesses to compete with others. We are not in a high population area and virtually all products must be transported from here to other areas.

Please give strong consideration to this project in your enumeration.

Yours very truly,



Ralph F. Herlache

ORIGINAL SENT TO:  
GOVERNOR TOMMY THOMPSON  
CHAIRMAN TRANSPORTATION  
PROJECTS COMMISSION  
WISCONSIN DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION  
4802 SHEBOYGAN AVE RM 951  
MADISON WI 53705

JUL 26 1996

WILLIAM D SCHAUDOIR  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
DOOR COUNTY ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT CORP  
PO BOX 423  
STURGEON BAY WI 54235-0423

July 24, 1996

COPY

Governor Thompson, my purpose for writing to you is to express strong support for the upgrading of Highway 57, specifically the 18 mile section from Dykesville to State Highway 42.

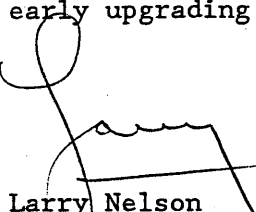
For the past 28 years, I have traveled that highway for business reasons as well as personal reasons, as I am property owner in Door County.

With the level of traffic on that highway, especially during the tourist season, I feel that there is a strong element of danger involved.

With the many camper type vehicles on the road, traveling slower than most of the rest of the traffic, there are many impatient drivers who pass when they shouldn't, causing a dangerous situation on this two lane highway.

In addition, this highway is Door County's only commercial outlet, due to there being no rail or air transportation to and from that area.

For all of the above reasons, I would appreciate your support for the early upgrading of this highway.



Larry Nelson  
159 Kenney Street  
Green Bay, WI 54301  
Phone: (414)336-9117

cc: WILLIAM D SCHAUDOIR, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
DOOR COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP

# DAISY BASKETS & CARRIERS

JUL 24 1996

Governor Tommy Thompson, Chairman  
Transportation Projects Commission  
WI Dept. of Transportation  
4802 Sheboygan Ave. Room 951  
Madison, WI 53705


Dear Governor Thompson,

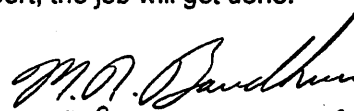
I understand that it is highway enumeration time again. I would be remiss if I didn't get my request into you again for consideration of Hwy 57 from Dycksville to Hwy 42.

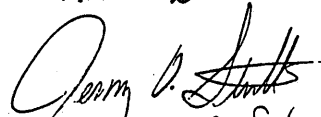
Aside from the economic considerations, of which there are obviously many, my primary reason for writing you is that of safety. It only seems a short time ago that I sat in on a workshop/hearing at the Sturgeon Bay Yacht Club, attended by the DOT from Green Bay. Chairman Thompson, Senator Lasee and other leaders from this community. A comment made by Chairman Thompson indicating that the lack of major traffic accidents on this stretch of highway did not warrant more than normal safety concerns by the DOD. My comment to him at the time was that the lack of major accidents was testimony to careful, alert, and gracious driving by local folks who regularly sacrifice roadway for shoulder to avoid creating a statistic that would gain attention. I also commented that, sad to say, it would probably take a lot of white crosses on that highway to get someone's attention.

I could get real emotional about the recent death of Linda Jeanquart, but that would serve no constructive purpose here. Let me say though, that could have been a scene of real carnage. That is only one of the many "Hurry up and Pass" venues on that highway. There is not much relief on that stretch until you hit the divided highway at the south "Y" of 42/57, but you've traveled it enough to know. I know that with your support, the job will get done.

Your loyal supporter as always,

  
Will Jeanquart  
General Mgr., Daisy Baskets Div.  
Dorco Mfg. Inc.

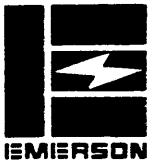
  
V.P. Dorco Mfg. Inc.

  
Director of Sales

  
Pres.

A Division of Dorco Manufacturing Incorporated

810 North 6th Avenue • P.O. Box 200 • Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235-0200 • (414) 743-2802 • TOLL FREE: 800-963-2479 • FAX: (414) 746-2999



**Sturgeon Bay Motor Plant**  
821 S. Neenah Avenue  
Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin 54235  
(414) 743-8251

JUL 24 1996

July 22, 1996

Governor Tommy G. Thompson  
State Capitol  
P O Box 7863  
Madison, WI 53707-7863

Dear Governor Thompson:

Re: Support for Enumeration of STH 57 Dykesville to  
Sturgeon Bay STH 42

Part of my responsibilities are to support opportunities that I feel will make Emerson more competitive; and give the 500 employees at Emerson Sturgeon Bay a competitive advantage. As you know competition from both domestic sources as well as off shore suppliers remains a major challenge we face daily.

The 42-57 corridor remains a vital part of our business that allows us the ability to move 40 million pounds of finished goods out of Sturgeon Bay annually. Access to a world class highway system insures us that we can rely on our suppliers to provide timely delivery of raw materials. And our suppliers can be assured that their equipment and employees are operating on a roadway that protects their business interests, and the safety of all others who share the 42-57 corridor.

Your leadership and support for enumeration of STH 57-42 would be another example of the strong business environment that you have created in Wisconsin. Continued improvements to our transportation system remain critical for both our growth and the safety of our employees.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

John J. Tong, Jr.  
Plant Manager  
Emerson Motor Co.

821 S Neenah Ave.  
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

MM 23 1996

# MARINE TRAVELIFT<sup>TM</sup> INC.

July 30, 1996

Transportation Projects Commission  
Public Hearing

Dear Commission Members:

The Highway 57 four lane improvement is needed as soon as possible.

This year there have been several traffic fatalities not to mention the prior years traffic deaths. The volume of traffic will continue to increase as our manufacturing and tourism industry grows.

Your support to have this vital highway upgraded to four lanes is appreciated and needed.

Sincerely,



Gerald P. Lamer  
President  
MARINE TRAVELIFT, INC.

GPL/cw



**SHUTTLELIFT** <sup>T.M.</sup> inc.

JULY 26, 1996

GOVERNOR TOMMY THOMPSON  
TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS  
4802 SHEBOYGAN AVE, RM 951  
MADISON, WI 53705

DEAR SIR:

THE 4 LANE HIGHWAY PROJECT BETWEEN DYCKESVILLE AND SOUTHERN DOOR  
COUNTY IS VERY MUCH NEEDED.

WE SHIP ALL OF OUR INCOMING AND OUTGOING PRODUCTS, NOT TO MENTION,  
CUSTOMERS AND DEALERS, VIA THIS ROUTE. YOUR HELP TO COMPLETE THIS  
PROJECT IS APPRECIATED.

SINCERELY,

STEVEN KRUEGER  
VICE PRESIDENT

SK/cm



# Amerifab

## corporation

a MARINE TRAVELIFT Co.

■ SHIPPING ADDRESS:  
107 E. Walnut Street  
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235  
Tel.: (414) 746-2940  
Fax: (414) 746-2959

■ MAILING ADDRESS:  
49 E. Yew Street  
P.O. Box 66  
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235-0066  
Tel.: (414) 743-6202  
Fax: (414) 743-1522

JULY 24, 1996

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS COMMISSION  
DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION  
4802 SHEBOYGAN AVE. RM 951  
MADISON, WI 53705

DEAR SIR:

DOOR COUNTY NEEDS THE FOUR LANE HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.

THE SAFETY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COMPANY DEPENDS ON IT.  
THIS "LIFELINE" TO GREEN BAY IS THE ONLY ROUTE OUT OF DOOR COUNTY.  
PLEASE SUPPORT THIS WORTHWHILE IMPROVEMENT.

SINCERELY,



GERALD P. LAMER  
PRESIDENT

GPL/cm



**PALMER JOHNSON**  
*Incorporated*

July 24, 1996

Governor Tommy Thompson, Chairman  
Transportation Projects Commission  
WI Dept. of Transportation  
4802 Sheboygan Ave., Room 951  
Madison, WI 53705

Dear Tommy:

Enumeration of STH 57 - Dyckesville to STH 42

I am writing to express my support for funding the Highway 57 improvements, and I believe it is urgent that this work be accelerated for the following reasons:

- 1) **Safety.** Due to increased traffic, Highway 57's safety record has worsened considerably.
- 2) **Economic development in Door County.** The present highway is a deterrent to business and industrial development, as well as tourism.
- 3) **Traffic flow.** A corridor, or 4-lane highway intersecting with I-43, would facilitate a smoother traffic flow going north to Door County.

Essentially, all of Palmer Johnson's customer traffic and most of our incoming materials for construction come via the I-43. We use Green Bay as our hub for business: airport, freight, and customers. Traffic has become so congested that a 4-lane highway is now critical if we are to maintain reasonable growth in Door County. The efficiency and progression of commerce, the ability to remain competitive, and the safety of our citizens clearly affect us.

I strongly urge you and your committee to take whatever immediate steps are necessary to insure that funding for this project is listed as a priority in the state budget. Economic growth and development and highway safety in Door County will depend on it.

Sincerely yours,

**WILLIAM C. PARSONS**  
President

**CHARLEY Company**  
142 S. Madison Ave.  
STURGEON BAY WI 54235-0532  
(414) 743-8497 FAX (414) 743-8497

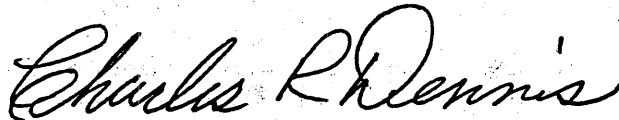
JUL 25 1986

Governor Tommy Thompson, Chairman  
Transportation Projects Commission  
WI Dept. of Transportation  
4802 Sheboygan Ave, Room 951  
Madison, WI 53705

Dear Sir:

We at Charley Company would like to add <sup>our</sup> support for the upgrading of  
Highway 57 (18 mile section of STH 57 from Dyckesville to STH 42).

Sincerely,



Charles R. Dennis  
Owner



SHIP DESIGNERS  
AND BUILDERS

# Peterson Builders, Inc.

STURGEON BAY, WISCONSIN 54235-0650  
101 Pennsylvania Street, P.O. Box 650

(414) 743-5574  
TELEX 26-3423  
FAX (414) 743-6089

July 18, 1996

Governor Tommy Thompson  
State of Wisconsin  
Office of the Governor  
State Capitol, Room 115 East  
P.O. Box 7863  
Madison, WI 53702-7863

Dear Governor Thompson:

Thank you for helping celebrate the ground breaking for the Door County Maritime Museum on July 6. This is important to Door County and our State.

Our area is growing. The Industrial Park employment is up with more trucks coming and going. There are more tourists coming to Door County and more visitors to the Maritime Museum, etc.

The Highway 57 4-lane from Dyckesville to the "Y" south of Sturgeon Bay is a must. The recent seven car pile-up and resulting death again shows the need for a priority on the Highway 57 4-lane.

Please help! Our future depends on it!!

Sincerely,

E. L. Peterson  
President

cc  
cc Mr. Chuck Thompson  
Senator Alan Lasee

bcc Bob Papke  
Bill Chaudoir



**STARR  
REALTY**

**JUL 21 1996**

Box 167 • 3rd & Michigan • Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235  
(414) 743-7283 • FAX (414) 743-0297

Box 407 • 930 S. Bay Shore Dr. • Sister Bay, WI 54234  
(414) 854-2394 • FAX (414) 839-2842

July 22, 1996

Governor Tommy Thompson, Chairman  
Transportation Projects Commission  
WI Dept. of Transportation  
4802 Sheboygan Avenue, Room 951  
Madison, WI 53705

Dear Governor Thompson:

We are writing in support for the upgrading of Highway 57. As year around residents and full time business people in Door County we see the need for this project.

The volume of traffic is one concern and accidents are another. There have been several fatalities on that stretch of road in 1996.

We want to make it as easy and as safe as possible for everyone to get to this area whether they are coming for recreation or work.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Dennis and Pam Starr

Excavating  
Bulldozing  
Equipment Rentals

# Sturgeon Bay Sand and Gravel, Inc.

934 Shiloh Road  
Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin 54235  
Phone 414/743-2904

Washed Sand  
Crushed Stone  
Riprap Stone

JUL 23 1996

July 22, 1996

Governor Tommy Thompson, Chairman  
Transportation Projects Commission  
WI Department of Transportation  
4802 Sheboygan Ave., Room 951  
Madison, WI 53705

Dear Governor Thompson:

This letter is being written to show our support for the up-  
grading of the 18 mile section of STH 57 from Dyckesville to  
STH 42.

Our company experienced a serious accident (with fatalities)  
on this section of the highway last winter. An up-graded  
roadway may have reduced the severity of this accident.

Very truly yours,

THE BISSEN CO. LTD.



Ivan Bissen  
President

IB/dm

cc: Mr. Wm. D. Chaudoir  
Door County Economic Dev. Corp.  
P. O. Box 423  
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235



JUL 23 1996

## MIDWEST WIRE PRODUCTS LLC

P.O. Box 770, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin 54235 • 649 South Lansing Avenue  
(414) 743-6591 • FAX No. (414) 743-3777

*"Quality You Can Trust Around The Bend"*

Governor Tommy Thompson, Chairman  
Transportation Projects Commission  
Wis. Dept. of Transportation  
4802 Sheboygan Ave., Room 951  
Madison, Wisconsin 53705

July 22, 1996

Dear Governor Thompson:

I urge you in the strongest terms to consider the upgrading of Highway 57 between Green Bay and Sturgeon Bay to four lane status. We have employees, customers, and vendors driving that stretch of highway, and we have accumulated many stories of narrow escapes. Not everybody is so fortunate, though. There was a recent traffic fatality just north of Dyckesville, and last year a double fatality next to Southern Door High School. With the extraordinary tourist traffic to Door County in the summer, the situation becomes truly dangerous.

We have made great strides in the development of our tourism industry in Door County; a stretch of deathtrap highway can end that.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Eric Vollrath  
President

EV/mic

May 23, 1996

Senator Alan J. Lasee  
State Capitol  
P. O. Box 7882  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703-7882

Dear Senator Lasee:

I have been watching the Highway 57 project between Green Bay and Sturgeon Bay with much interest over the past ten years or so. Until this past year my interest has been mostly business.

As Community Bank President of the Door County Banking Offices of Associated Bank, I not only travel Highway 57 an average of two to three times per week but also realize that this highway is Door County's economic lifeline. As you know, most of our tourists enter and leave Door County by Highway 57. But more important, my experience serving as a Director of Boards such as the Door County Economic Development Corporation, Door County Chamber of Commerce and Door County Industrial Development Corporation has convinced me that four lane access to the Interstate system is mandatory for Door County to realize any significant growth in our industrial sector.

My interest in this highway project has changed over the past fifteen months. Since then there have been seven traffic fatalities on Highway 57. Each of these fatalities involved collisions of vehicles travelling in opposite directions. These collisions probably would not have occurred on a four lane highway.

Most recently, May 21, 1996 to be exact, a 22 year old woman was killed in a collision with a truck on Highway 57. This young woman was the daughter of Kaye Hilander, a long term employee of our Baileys Harbor Banking Office. You can imagine the shock and grieving this accident has created within our family of Bank employees. But this shock and grieving is probably no different than the anguish suffered by the surviving family and friends of the other six traffic fatalities.

The traffic fatalities mentioned above may be only the tip of the iceberg. Door County traffic counts confirm that traffic on Highway 57 is increasing between 5% and 6% per year. When one considers this increase is exponential, it is very likely that accidents will increase on Highway 57, not decrease.



I have been told that highway construction is determined by traffic counts, fatalities and politics. You have access to our traffic counts which confirm that our averages exceed state recommended levels for four lane highway construction. These averages do not point out that our spike periods more than double the state's recommended averages. So we can show that Highway 57 has traffic counts exceeding those recommended for four lane highway construction.

The second issue is fatalities. How many more deaths will it take before the real need, the human need, comes to the attention of the politicians? Seven deaths in fifteen months is unacceptable.

The third issue is politics. During the last year I have watched the political clout being wielded by Green Bay and Brown County politicians to get the Dousman Street Bridge replaced. When I see this happen I know that getting Highway 57 completed to Sturgeon Bay is a matter of Leadership from our elected officials. As the Chairman of the Transportation Committee, you have the position to ensure that our Highway 57 project is approved, funded and completed.

In this regard I have discussed the Highway 57 issue with many business leaders in Door County. They all feel as I do. We have supported you for many years with our votes and we are looking for you to exercise the Leadership necessary to get Highway 57 upgraded. The time schedule published in the March 1995 DOT Highway 57 Improvement Project Update pamphlet was construction for the Highway 54 to Highway P (Dykesville) between 2000 and 2002 and the remaining section to Highway 42 between 2002 and 2005. In my mind this is an acceptable time schedule. Recent news articles indicating that Highway 57 may not be completed until 2010 is unacceptable.

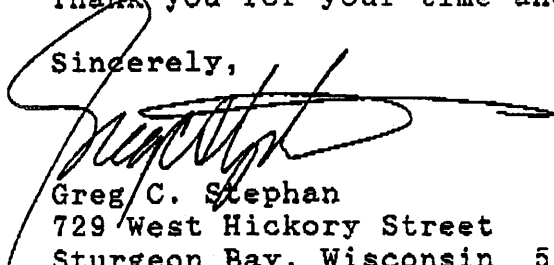
When politics is discussed, funding is always a major concern. I was personally very disappointed that the gas tax issue was not passed. While no one likes paying more for fuel, an upgraded Highway 57 will bring more revenues into Door County and should offset our increased costs. However, there are more sources of funding than increased gas tax. The May 22, 1996 Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel had a front page article indicating that Wisconsin will have \$360 million in surplus funds by the end of the current budget cycle. It seems to me that use of these surplus funds will be determined by the State Politicians that exercise Leadership in the House and Senate.

There are many other highway projects that require approval and funding. I recognize the political reality that projects such as Highway 29 and the Milwaukee Freeway will take precedence over Highway 57. But Highway 57 must be top on the list of other projects being completed based on the established need and the political clout of our Senator chairing the Transportation Committee.

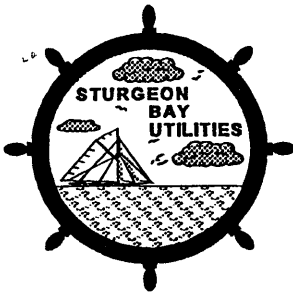
Senator Lasee, it is not my intention that the tone of this letter should be negative. However, as a voter and business leader in Door County, I have run out of patience with the Highway 57 issue. We have talked about it for the past twenty years. It is time for you to exercise the Leadership to accomplish this much needed improvement. If I can assist you in any way, I can be reached at Associated Bank in Sturgeon Bay at (414) 743-6521 or at my home (414) 743-2911.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Greg C. Stephan  
729 West Hickory Street  
Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin 54235



# STURGEON BAY UTILITIES

230 E. Vine Street P.O. Box 259  
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235  
Phone: 414-746-2820  
Fax: 414-746-2822

JUL 26 1996

July 24, 1996

Governor Tommy Thompson, Chairman  
Transportation Projects Commission  
WI Dept. of Transportation  
4802 Sheboygan Avenue, Room 951  
Madison, WI 53705

Dear Governor Thompson:

I am writing to express my continued concern with the lack of available funding and in turn the construction delays associated with the Highway 42/57 four lane Highway Project north of Dykesville.

There are a number of people in Door County that support an accelerated schedule to improve safety and this area's viability for continued economic growth. It is also understood that existing funding sources may not allow for an accelerated schedule but this project is so critical to our area that I believe most people would support an increase in the gas tax if necessary to fund this project.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this manner and I trust you will find an acceptable way to accelerate this schedule.

Sincerely,

Scott D. Adams P.E.  
General Manager

cc: Bill Chaudiour, DCED Corp.

SDA:lk.sdal

OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY - FRIDAY - 7:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.

ELECTRICITY

WATER

WASTE WATER TREATMENT



July 29, 1996

Governor Tommy Thompson, Chairman  
Transportation Projects Commission  
WI Dept. of Transportation  
4802 Sheboygan Avenue, Room 951  
Madison, WI 53705

Dear Governor Thompson:

I am writing in support of the State Highway 57 Improvement project. The taxpayers of Door County have waited long enough for a four lane highway connecting us with the interstate system. We are not asking for a free lunch as we send more tax dollars to Madison per capita than almost any other County in the State. Businesses in this area rely on this highway as their only choice of transportation and in the past several years we have had way too many traffic fatalities.

Can we please do what has to be done to get this project completed in a timely manner? If additional dollars are needed to complete projects such as this, then let's raise the gas tax and allocate those funds to benefit these projects.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Gilson  
Vice President

MJG:kn

**DOOR COUNTY HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION  
P. O. BOX 112  
STURGEON BAY WI 54235**

July 29, 1996

Governor Tommy Thompson, Chairman  
Transportation Projects Commission  
WI Dept. of Transportation  
4802 Sheboygan Avenue, Room 951  
Madison, WI 53705

Dear Governor Tommy Thompson and  
Transportation Projects Commission:

I am the President of the Door County Home Builders Association and represent 39 Door County businesses, made up not only builders, but also many associate businesses.

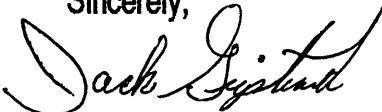
As a group, we are expressing concern regarding the 15 years wait to upgrade Highway 57 from Dyckesville to STH 42. For economic and safety reasons, we can not wait another 15 years.

Our economy depends too much on suppliers, vendors and customers ease of travel in and out of the peninsula. Our economy is already affected by people not wanting to travel dangerous roadway. We can not expect more people to travel on an already crowded road.

This highway provides our link to the outside area, being a peninsula, and the conditions at the present time are dangerous and restrict our transportation.

Please reconsider the time frame for upgrading Highway 57 for reasons of economic growth for Door County and for the safety of many.

Sincerely,



Jack Gigstead, President  
Door County Home Builders Association

# **STH 57 ENUMERATION**

**RECENT LOCAL**

**NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE**

# Four lanes for 57 could take 15 years

By JOE KNAAPEN  
OF THE ADVOCATE STAFF

A plan to make Highway 57 a four-lane expressway between Sturgeon Bay and Green Bay may have a lot of support in Door County, but the reality of the funding process is that the project may not be started for at least 15 years.

"It is critical to make clear now how much we support the Highway 57 improvements for reasons of business and safety," said William Chaudoir, director of the Door County Economic Development Corp. (DCEDC). "We have to get the project on the list now or it isn't going to happen. Because of current funding levels, if Highway 57 is enumerated today, the earliest it can start is 2008, and that is not adequate."

Chaudoir's assessment is more optimistic than a recent analysis by the Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin, a non-profit organization that promotes transportation issues. Under current funding levels, it will take 15 years for any project to be built after it earns the endorsement of the Legislature. The delay is three times longer than it took for an approved project to be completed five years ago, according to Philip Scherret, the Transportation Development Association's director.

Many projects listed for funding have been in the planning stages for eight or nine years, Scherret contin-

ued, but shortfalls in federal and state funding for major highway projects continue to prolong the gap between a project's approval and the start of its construction.

The state Legislature last year rejected efforts to increase gas taxes to pay for more highway and bridge work. Some projects are so important, Chaudoir said, that the Transportation Development Association and DCEDC support alternative funding sources. He encouraged the Legislature to consider toll roads and increases in gas taxes, user fees and registration fees to generate more dollars for highway improvements.

In Door County, DCEDC, a quasi-governmental agency organized to encourage business retention and recruitment, has been given the responsibility to plead the case supporting the improvements on Highway 57.

"We haven't heard much against the Highway 57 improvements," Chaudoir said. "A mass transit or bus system in Door County just isn't feasible. Traffic counts peak at 15,000 to 18,000 vehicles per day, and that justifies a four-lane highway."

Recent increases in the number of accidents and fatal crashes on Highway 57 are adding to the need for the project, Chaudoir said.

On July 17, for example, a three-car collision on Highway 57 at the Door-Kewaunee county line did not result in any major injuries, but it disrupted traffic for more than an

hour while paramedics checked for injuries and sheriff's deputies investigated the collision. Traffic had to be routed away from the highway on narrow town roads, and members of the Brussels-Union-Gardner Fire Department were called out to direct traffic.

The worsening safety record of Highway 57 could help get the project listed for funding, Chaudoir said. When the project initially was proposed two years ago, he said, the accident and fatality figures were so

injuries she received in a seven-vehicle collision at her driveway on Highway 57 in the town of Union.

The construction of a major highway improvement, like widening Highway 57 along its 36-mile route between Sturgeon Bay and Green Bay, can only start after the project is listed as a priority in the state budget. The entire project is expected to cost about \$63 million. Getting on the state's list, a process called enumeration, requires a recommendation from the state

**'It is critical to make clear now how much we support the Highway 57 improvements for reasons of business and safety.'**

**—William Chaudoir,  
DCEDC**

low that other projects were moved ahead of Highway 57. Current data, however, could make Highway 57 a priority project.

Since 1987, when the Door County Sheriff's Department began putting data on computers, 10 persons were killed on Highway 57 south of Sturgeon Bay. Of those traffic deaths, eight occurred since December 1994. The most recent traffic death came when a Southern Door woman died on July 5 of

The southern half of Highway 57, from Green Bay to Dyckesville, already is listed for funding in the state budget, with construction to start in 2002. Other projects on the

list, including the major improvement being built on Highway 20 from Green Bay to Chippewa Falls will account for the state's share of federal highway funding well beyond the year 2000, according to information from the state Department of Transportation.

In order to get in line for funding once the current projects are completed, Chaudoir explained, the Highway 57 project needs the endorsement from the state Transportation Projects Commission. The commission will hear comments for and against Highway 57 at 10 a.m. Tuesday, July 30, in public hearing at Bemis International Center on the St. Norbert College campus in De Pere. Chaudoir said a contingent of Door County business and government leaders will attend the hearing to present a strong case in favor of placing Highway 57 on the list for funding and construction.

"This project has consistent been mentioned as one of the most important issues facing Door County, as it represents a major tourism and commerce route to the area," said State Senator Al Lasee, R-Rockland, whose district encompasses Door County. Lasee probably will oversee the July 30 hearing because he is the vice chairman of the Transportation Projects Commission. Governor Tom Thompson is the commission's official chairman, but has not often taken a full day away from his other duties to chair its hearings.

# Highway 57 could get priority

By JOE KNAAPEN  
OF THE ADVOCATE STAFF

A plan to upgrade Highway 57 to four lanes between Dyckesville and Nasewaupsee has a stronger chance of getting on a state priority list for funding because of an increase in fatal traffic accidents, according to State Senator Alan Lasee, R-Rockland.

"It is sad to say, but that's how the system works," said Lasee in an interview that came after a July 2 crash resulted in the most recent traffic fatality on Highway 57 in Door County.

Lasee was asked to assess Highway 57's chances of being funded for improvements after a Southern Door woman died on July 5 of injuries she received in a seven-vehicle collision on July 2. The accident occurred at her driveway on Highway 57 about two miles north of the Door-Kewaunee county line.

Lasee is chairman of the senate Transportation Committee and the state Transportation Projects Commission, two groups which will play major roles in deciding whether the state makes Highway 57 a priority project.

"Having a reputation, like 'Bloody 29,' gets attention and funding," Lasee said. He compared the worsening record of Highway 57 between Green Bay and Sturgeon Bay to the safety record of Highway 29 where fatality and collision rates forced the state to spend most of its highway money in recent years to improve the cross-state link between Green Bay and Chippewa Falls. Highway 29 is being widened to four lanes along its entire 182-mile route, including bypasses around some cities, at an estimated total cost of \$405 million.

The emphasis on completing Highway 29 and other high-priority highways, plus a cut in federal funds, have combined to delay the start of dozens of other road projects. The federal funding shortfall already has pushed back by two years the start of the southern

half of the Highway 57 project, a 16-mile stretch from Highway 54 in Brown County north to Dyckesville. At this point, the lack of funds means that the construction of the Highway 57-54 interchange will not start until 2002, and the entire upgrade between Green Bay and Sturgeon Bay will not be completed until 2010.

The Transportation Project Commission will hear comments for placing Highway 57 and one other project on the priority list at a July 30 public hearing in De Pere. The other project is a plan to widen Highway 141 to four lanes north of Green Bay for 15.4 miles from Highway 22 to Highway 64 north of Pound. The hearing will start at 10 a.m. on the St. Norbert College campus.

Comments on four other projects will be considered at a hearing on July 17 in Janesville. Those projects include a bypass involving highways 11, 36 and 83 at Burlington to resolve safety and congestion problems; the upgrading of Highway 12 to a four-lane divided expressway and a bypass of Daraboo; a new four-lane transportation corridor for La Crosse; and the upgrading of Highway 151 in the southwest part of the state to include bypasses of Dickeyville and Blatteville.

After the hearings, the state Department of Transportation will recommend by Sept. 15 which projects should be placed on the priority list by the Transportation Projects Commission. The commission then will submit its recommendations to Governor Tommy Thompson and the Legislature for inclusion in the 1997 budget. The enumeration process commits the state to completing the work in priority order with other state highway projects when sufficient state and federal monies become available.

If Highway 57 wins approval at all levels of the process, and if federal money becomes available as projected, the four-lane upgrade could be completed

Continued page 3



—Advocate photo by Heidi Hodges

Highway 57: Three lanes aren't enough



# Highway 57

--From page 1

by 2010, according to DOT engineers.

The Highway 57 project has a better chance of being listed this year than two years ago because its safety record has gotten worse, said Lasee, whose 1st Senate District includes Door County. The highway has been the scene of three of Door County's five fatal traffic accidents in 1996.

The safety record—the number of crashes and traffic deaths—is one

of several elements, the Transportation Projects Commission looks at when deciding whether to add a candidate project, like Highway 57, to the state's priority list for construction. Projects also are evaluated on the basis of how they will enhance the state or local economy, improve traffic flow, affect the environment, and serve various community objectives. Points are assigned for how well each project will solve one of the problems, and

the project with the most points gets placed on the priority list.

When the Highway 57 project first was proposed for listing, the statistics on traffic accidents and deaths were so low that the plan lost out to other road work, Lasee said. "Highway 57 was bumped off the list by one point in 1994," Lasee said. "It's sad, but the fatal accidents will give us a better chance to get funding."

Getting on the list will take some

politicizing because so many projects are competing for funds from a shrinking pot of dollars, Lasee said.

"I hope a large delegation turns out at the [July 30] hearing to make the pitch for our project," Lasee said. "The governor owes us this one. Two years ago he pushed another project ahead of Highway 57. We missed the list by one point, and we thought we were double-crossed."

While the highway projects are competing for priority listing, the real issue will be "getting enough money to do the work," Lasee said. Proposals to increase the state gas tax in 1995, for example, were rejected by the legislature, and meant that fewer highway projects could be built as scheduled.

The Transportation Projects Commission had historically set projects out for construction about seven years in the future with a strong probability that enough money would be available to complete them by that point. The funding shortfall from federal highway coffers and the commitment of state funds to other projects, however, means the commission now is considering projects that will not be started for 15 years, Lasee said.

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# Hwy. 57 options numerous and varied

By JOE KNAAPEN  
OF THE ADVOCATE STAFF

State authorities already have decided to widen Highway 57 to four lanes between Green Bay and Sturgeon Bay.

But opinions on exactly where those extra two lanes should go are as many and varied as the number of people who spoke at a pair of hearings Monday and Tuesday, May 6 and 7.

Drawing the most diverse comments were four sections of Highway 57 in Door County: Tornado Park between Brussels and Sturgeon Bay; the hamlets of Brussels and Union; the "Brussels Hill," a rollercoaster slope just north of that community; and a stand of majestic pines in the town of Union just across the Door-Kewaunee county line, owned by Roy Delwiche. Comments by people attending the May 6 hearing at Southern Door High School focused on concerns

about environmental and historic preservation, safety and plain old personal preference. The state Department of Transportation is seeking public opinion about the best locations for a proposed Highway 57 expressway, to be built in gradual phases sometime after 2000. When the DOT moved to Dyckesville in Kewaunee County for its May 7 hearing, most comments were directed toward several proposed options for bypassing that community.

The public comments from both meetings, along with written comments postmarked by May 24, will be evaluated by the DOT and used in selecting a final corridor for the expanded highway. A recommended route will then be forwarded to the state Transportation Projects Commission, a panel chaired by the governor that is scheduled to decide in October whether to add Highway 57 to the state's list of major highway projects in line for funding.

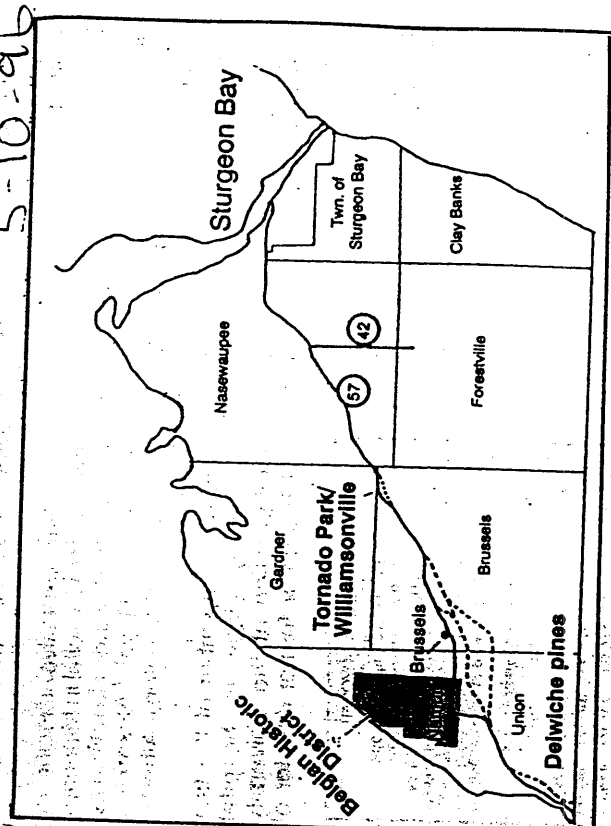
At the May 6 hearing, there were

competing opinions on whether the highway should continue to run through or go around Tornado Park. Established in 1927, the park honors the memory of 57 residents of the long-lost town of Williamsonville who died in a devastating 1871 fire, which is almost forgotten in the annals of history because it occurred the same day as the legendary Great Chicago Fire.

Preliminary archaeological studies have failed to unearth human remains at the site of the tiny logging hamlet. But archaeologists have found artifacts that form a snapshot of life at the moment when a devastating "tornado" of windswept fire roared through portions of Southern Door, Kewaunee, Brown and Oconto counties.

Opinions on how the highway right-of-way should be widened in Williamsonville pitted historical concerns against a desire to pre-

Continued page 13



**Where should Highway 57 go?** Solid line denotes existing highway corridor; dashed lines indicate optional routes for 4-lane expansion.  
—Advocate graphic by Bob LaViolette

# Highway 57 options

serve wetlands. "Tornado Park, or Williamsville, already has been disrupted, so why not continue the highway in its existing corridor?" said Terry Vogel, who owns property west of the existing highway.

An alternate route would cut through Vogel's land if the state decides to bypass Williamsville to preserve the historic site. In Vogel's opinion, moving the highway onto his land would unnecessarily disturb wetlands that form the headwaters of the Ahnapee River.

George Pinney, Door County's park supervisor, expressed an opposing point of view. "We have to preserve Tornado Park for its historic value," Pinney said. "It was the first park in the Door County park system."

In a similar fashion, thoughts were divided on whether the highway should go around or continue to cross over the Brussels Hill.

"Going over the Brussels Hill in any way is not a good idea. It isn't safe," said Ed Felhofer of Brussels.

His property on Dump Road would be bisected by an alternate route that would move the highway about half a mile east of its existing corridor. Felhofer said he would prefer a route that would swing even farther east and straighten a link

'The closer the highway comes to Brussels, the better.'

—Julie Garbowski, Brussels merchant

between proposed bypasses of Williamsville—located to the north of the hill—and of the Belgian hamlets of Brussels and Namur to the south.

A contrasting idea came from Richard Maurer, a resident of Union who formerly chaired that township's board and served for a time as the Union representative on the Door County Board of Supervisors. "You could widen the highway over the Brussels Hill and put a concrete barrier between the lanes so they couldn't cross over," Maurer said. "Cave explorers prefer that no further disruptions occur on the hill," said Gary Soule, a Sturgeon Bay cave enthusiast who represented the Wisconsin Speleological Society.

"Widening the route over the hill could break into a cave system where we have recovered bones that date back to the birth of Christ," Soule said. "The hill is a rock core drumlin and the second-highest point in Door County."

"We have a virgin cave under it that has never been explored. You

access to the district by visitors who want to view or study the ethnic enclave.

One alternate route would start from the south at The Pines tavern, swing far to the east to avoid the existing curves there and in Namur, then bypass Brussels and rejoin the existing highway north of the Brussels Hill.

Other options are being considered at the south end of the county to take the fewest trees possible from Delwiche's prized pinery, which he and local environmental groups are fighting valiantly to preserve.

In Kewaunee and Brown counties, there are a couple of options on the table for widening the highway at Dyckesville.

The existing right-of-way could be widened through Dyckesville or

take a wide sweep around the community—swinging well east from the Rock Falls Bar to County Highway A north of Dyckesville. Another possibility is to move just east of existing development in the community.

An Appleton woman complained that making Highway 57 a four-lane

expressway would create traffic bottlenecks at Sturgeon Bay, because there are no plans to improve the highway in northern Door County.

"We have no intention ever to go north of Sturgeon Bay with a four-lane highway," DOT Engineer Joe Hollister confirmed. But, speaking of the proposed four-lane route between Sturgeon Bay and Green Bay, he said, "if there was not a need, we would not be here. We have a 'do nothing' alternative [that was discounted]. We also looked at adding some passing lanes, but that would not work because there is too much traffic."

In 1995 an average of 7,000 vehicles used Highway 57 on any given day. The vehicle count peaked at almost 14,000 a day in July, the height of Door County's tourist season.

Widening of Highway 57 to four lanes is scheduled to begin in about 2002 with construction of a major interchange at the junction of highways 57 and 54 just north of Green Bay. Already approved for funding, probably by 2004, is a 12-mile section from Highway 54 to a

—From page 1

Kewaunee County road south of Dyckesville. Money for the project would come from gas tax and vehicle registration revenue.

If approved for funding later this year, the northern segment that was the focus of this week's public hearings—from Dyckesville to the Highway 42 intersection five miles south of Sturgeon Bay—probably will not be constructed until sometime between 2010 and 2020.

# Pileup sends two to hospital

By JOE KNAAPEN  
OF THE ADVOCATE STAFF

A chain reaction collision of seven vehicles in heavy traffic Tuesday, July 2, injured eight people—including two who required hospital treatment—and added more grim statistics to arguments for widening Highway 57 to four lanes in Door County.

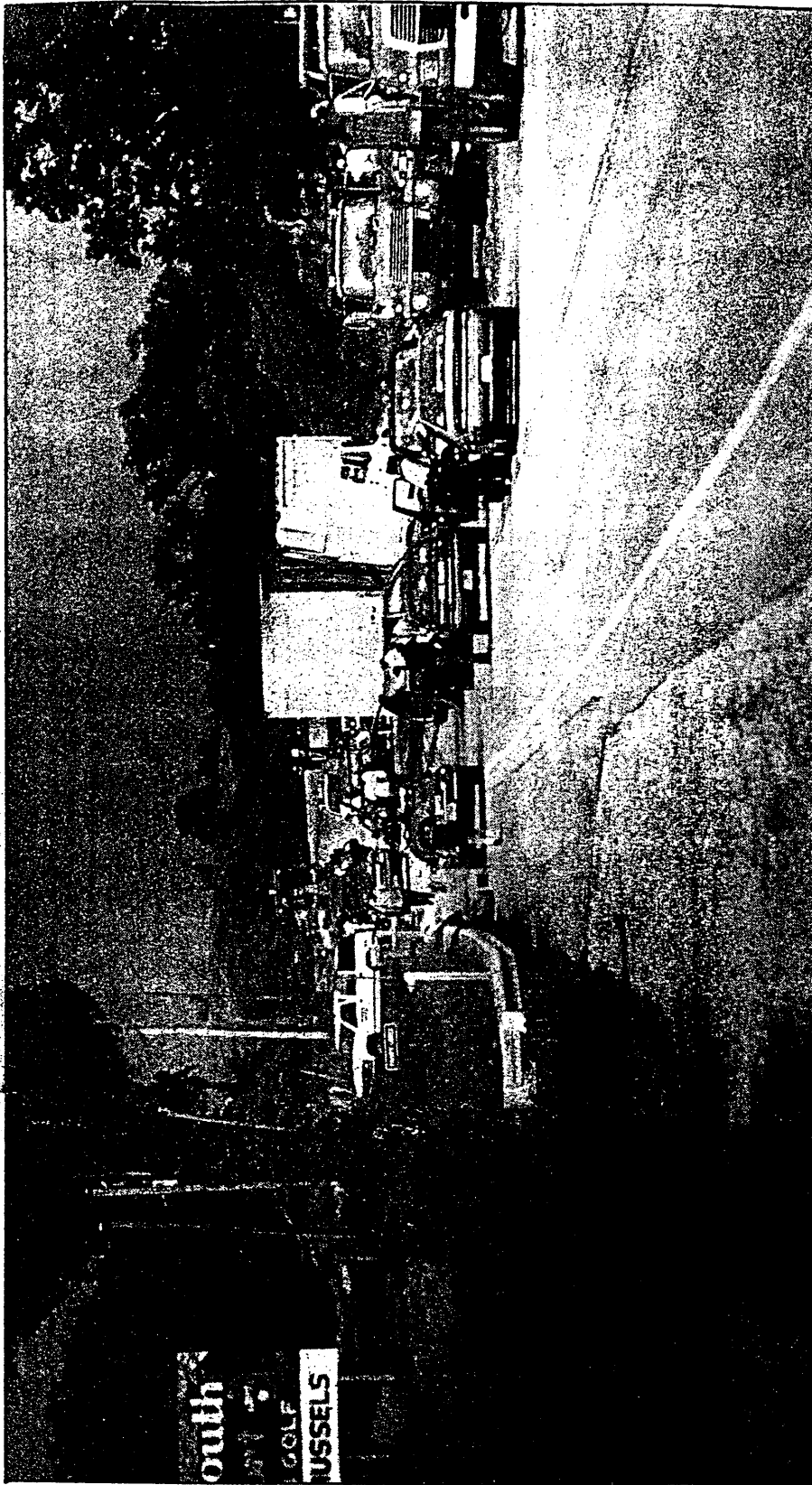
The crash occurred at 2:17 p.m. in heavy traffic just north of the Boss Tavem, about two miles north of the Door-Kewaunee county line in the Peninsula town of Union. Deputies closed off the highway for nearly seven hours and detoured traffic away from the scattered wreckage and spilled diesel fuel. The highway was not cleared until about 9:30 p.m.

"We had our hands full," said Sgt. Terry Vogel, the Door County Sheriff's Department officer who took charge of the accident scene, which quickly included five ambulance crews, seven sheriff's deputies, several sheriff's department reserve officers, four state patrol troopers, five emergency medical crews and members of the Brussels-Union-Gardner Fire Department.

According to Vogel's preliminary investigation, the accident unfolded as a car driven by Linda E. Jeanquart, 48, Luxemburg, slowed or stopped in the northbound lane of Highway 57 before turning into a driveway. Her car was rear-ended when a truck driven by Thomas J. Shefchik, 18, Luxemburg, did not stop on time, Vogel said.

The impact pushed Jeanquart's car across the centerline of the highway and into the path of a southbound semi-truck and trailer driven by James E. Babcock, 54, South Beloit, IL.

The semi sheared the engine off Jeanquart's car and tossed her 8-year-old son Nathan out of the vehicle, Vogel said. Both Jeanquarts, the most seriously injured of the seven



## Accident scene: 'We had our hands full'

—Advocate photo by Heidi Hodges

accident victims, were listed in fair condition Wednesday morning, July 3, at St. Vincent Hospital in Green Bay.

According to deputies, the semi jackknifed and continued south—striking a car driven by Laurie T. Hoffman, 38, Sturgeon Bay and a van driven by Barbara A. Larsen, 54, River Forest, IL—before coming to a stop. About 50 gallons of diesel fuel spilled when the truck's tank was punctured by the impact of the collisions.

Meanwhile, a van driven by Greg-

ory P. Dorschel, 39, Nashville, TN, was unable to stop for the initial collision and struck the Jeanquart car from behind.

Dorschel was not injured, but his wife Lori, 32, and one of his three sons—Jacob, 9—were transported to Door County Memorial Hospital for medical treatment. The Dorschels, Hoffman, Shefchik, Larsen and Mary E. Platts, 69, a passenger in the Larsen car, all were treated and later released from DCMH.

The final crash in the chain reaction came when a southbound pick-

up truck driven by Walter B. Bentley, 57, Sturgeon Bay, collided with the engine that had been knocked out of Jeanquart's car. Bentley was not injured.

Traffic was routed off Highway 57 at Sand Hill Road and detoured around the accident scene by way of County Highway Y. Vogel said sheriff's deputies and reserves directed traffic with help from the Brussels-Union-Gardner Fire Department. Medical assistance was provided by South County Rescue, two ambulances from the Door County Emer-

gency Services Department and two ambulances from Para Tran, a private medical transport service.

Vogel said the Door County Highway Department hauled in four truckloads of sand to cover the spilled diesel fuel. The delay in reopening the highway to traffic, he explained, was partly due to the time it took for the sand to absorb the fuel and then be scraped up by the highway department crew.

Ironically, the dramatic collision

## Crash

—From page 1

occurred on the same day as state's Transportation Projects Commission heard a presentation for upgrading Highway 57 from Dyckesville to Nasewaupée to four lanes. The TPC, chaired by the governor and comprised of both lawmakers and private citizens, evaluates and selects major highway projects that will receive funding from state transportation dollars.

The Highway 57 project, covering 17.3 miles and expected to cost about \$53 million, was one of six that the state is considering for future funding. The commission will hold a public hearing on the need for the project in Green Bay Tuesday, July 30.

The July 2 crash was "terrible," said William Chaudoir, director of the Door County Economic Development Corp. and a leading local advocate of widening the highway. "But, unfortunately, it adds to a safety record that has worsened in the last two years." In past years, portions of the Highway 57 project have lost out on funding because the road's accident and fatality statistics were relatively good.

About five fatal accidents, including two this year, have occurred on sections of Highway 57 south of Sturgeon Bay in the last two years, Chaudoir said. Safety factors—including the number of crashes, crashes per mile and crashes involving deaths or serious injuries—are "a very significant factor" in getting the highway improvements listed for funding, Chaudoir added.

DCEDC, a county agency funded by public and private money, has taken the lead in lobbying for the improvements to Highway 57.

The Legislature already has agreed to widen Highway 57 to four lanes south from Dyckesville to Green Bay, a project that probably will not start until 2002 because of a lack of federal and state money.

Fortunately, the multi-vehicle accident this week did not result in any deaths, said Sheriff Charles Brann. That crash might still have occurred even if Highway 57 were a four-laner, he added, but at least one of the past fatalities might have been avoided.

Brann said a head-on collision that claimed two lives in February probably would have been avoided if Highway 57 was a four-lane road in front of Southern Door Schools.

The July 2 crash also served as a reminder of how dangerous Peninsula roads can become with "a heavy mix of local traffic and visitors."

# Funding shortage delays Highway 57 by 2 years

By JOE KNAAPEN  
OF THE ADVOCATE STAFF

A lack of state and federal highway money will delay the start of a project to widen Highway 57 to four lanes between Green Bay and Sturgeon Bay for at least another two years. The work now cannot get under way until 2002 at the earliest, and the entire project is not expected to be finished until well after 2010.

The work on Highway 57 is among 26 major Wisconsin highway projects that will be delayed up to three years and 11 maintenance projects that will be pushed back to 1997, according to Charles Thompson, secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

Thompson said on April 4 that the DOT decided to delay many projects a short time rather than put a few projects on a longer hold until money became available. Any change in projected funding could change the construction dates even further, Thompson said.

Existing funds were allocated to projects already under way, Thompson said. The project that continues to tie up most of the money is the upgrading of Highway 29, the major east-west corridor for the northern part of the state, to four lanes, including several bypasses of cities, between Green Bay and Chippewa Falls.

"We are disheartened by the delay," said William Chaudoir, director of the Door County Economic Development Corp. The agency has helped Peninsula businesses and residents lobby for the widening of Highway 57. "This delay is holding us back from economic development. We'll keep plugging away until we get the highway completed."

Highway 57, like all the delayed road projects, has been justified through a complex process and is worthwhile, but there is not enough money to do all the work, said State Sen. Alan Lasee (R-Rockland), who chairs the transportation committee. The cost of widening Highway 57 to four lanes the entire 27.9 miles from Highway 54 to Highway 42 is estimated to cost from \$47 million to \$58 million, he added.

"The governor made so many promises to do so many projects that we just ran out of money," said Lasee, who also is a member of the Transportation Projects Committee, which places projects on a priority list for construction. Lasee's district encompasses Door, Kewaunee and Brown counties, all of which have supported the improvements to Highway 57 as

an aid to tourism and economic development.

"As far as I can determine," Lasee said, "the delays are partly due to Washington holding back \$8 million in transportation funds. Wisconsin has never gotten its full share of the money authorized under ISTEA [the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act]. The shortfall also is partly due to our failure to get a gas tax passed in the last state budget."

During the debate for the 1996-97 budget, Gov. Tommy Thompson proposed a 5-cent increase in a gasoline tax to cover highway and other improvements in the state transportation system. The state senate voted to increase the gas tax by 3.2 cents a gallon, Lasee said, but the Assembly would not increase the tax.

"If we get pressure from the public, we can raise taxes to pay for these projects," Lasee said. "Maybe the Legislature can sort it out with a gas tax increase of something less than 5 cents. The public could contact their congressmen, too, and find out why Wisconsin isn't getting its share of the ISTEA funds."

Under ISTEA authorizations for 1995, Wisconsin was scheduled to receive \$365.9 million, but only \$339.1 million was appropriated for the state in spendable dollars. The difference of \$26.8 million might be carried over to the current fiscal year and added to the state's 1996 appropriation of \$311 million in national highway funds, according to Chaudoir, who is a member of the state Transportation Development Association. The group monitors state transportation issues. Chaudoir said he may have more details after the association meeting scheduled for April 10.

The chances of changing the new schedule are "slim and none," said Assemblyman David Hutchison (R-Dyckesville). "You just hope there will be no more delays." Hutchison has supported the plan to improve the highway that runs by his home since he was first elected to the assembly in 1994. He also supported the unsuccessful effort to increase the gas tax for road construction.

The first step in widening Highway 57 to four lanes actually was completed about five years ago with a five-mile section running south from the Sturgeon Bay city limits to the junction with Highway 42. The next step was scheduled to start in 1997 at the Highway 57 intersection with Highway 54 in Brown

Continued page 3

4-9-96

# Highway 57

-From page 1

County and continue north to the Kewaunee County community of Dyckesville. The current financial shortfall means the earliest the project can start is the year 2002, with completion of the highway to just south of Dyckesville by 2004. The construction of the interchange at Highways 57 and 54 is scheduled to start in 2000.

The northern portion of the highway, from Dyckesville to the intersection with Highway 42 about five miles south of Sturgeon Bay, has not been approved by DOT, nor has it been enumerated for construction. A draft Environmental Impact Statement detailing the northern 10 miles of the project will be the subject of public hearings May 8 and 9. The study provides information about the impact of the highway widening will have on air quality, noise, wetlands, groundwater, vegetation, wildlife, natural areas, agri-

culture, tax base, schools, archeology, soils, businesses and buildings.

After the hearings, the DOT staff will collate the public comments and information provided by governmental agencies to make a recommendation on whether to proceed with the project and which specific corridor to follow.

If approved by DOT administrators, the work would have to be enumerated by the state Transportation Projects Commission and then approved for construction by an act of the Legislature. A specific construction starting date, probably not earlier than 2010, would hinge of the availability of state and federal funds, said Richard Huxford, manager of the project for DOT. The work would then take at least two years, and likely more.



# Door County Advocate

Serving Door County for 133 years

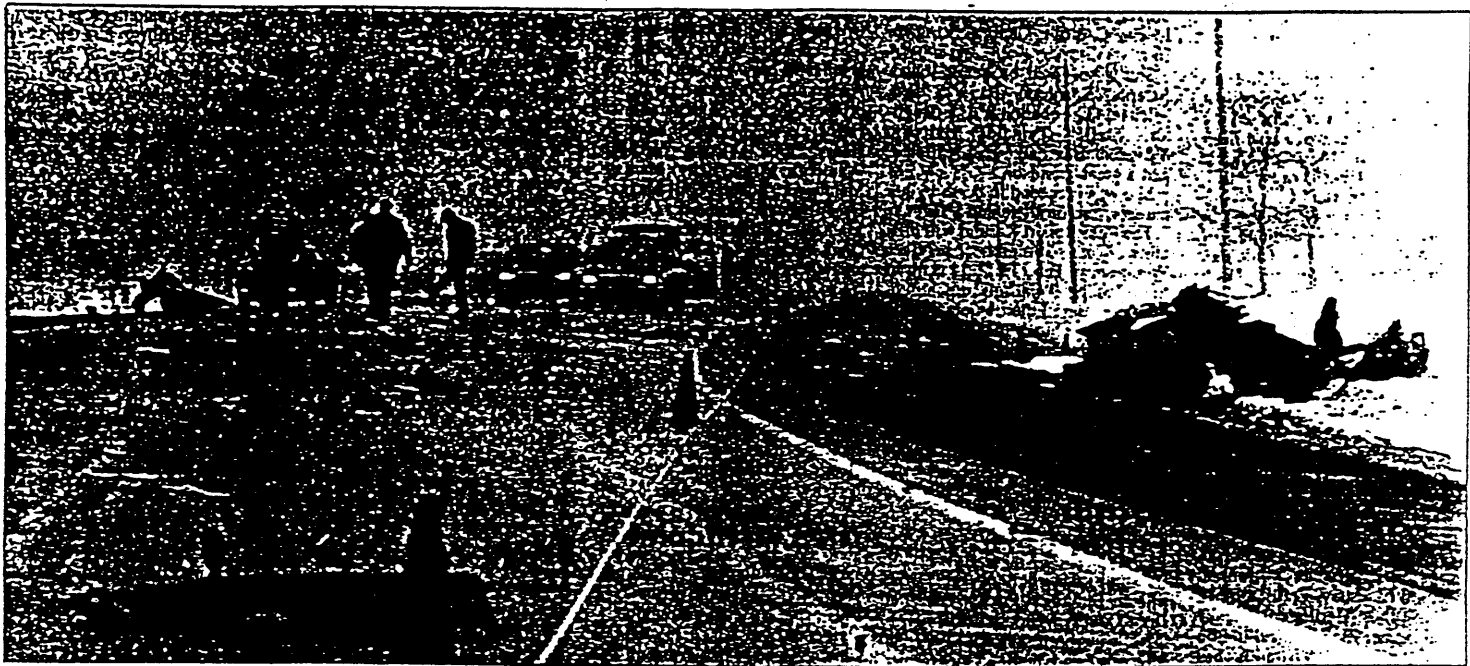
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STURGEON BAY, WI 54235—TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1996



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Advocate photo by Kory Mallen

Death in the fog: Sheriff's deputies pick through the debris, as the wreckage of the Harris car lies crumpled at right

## Head-on collision kills city couple

By JOE KNAAPEN  
OF THE ADVOCATE STAFF

A Sturgeon Bay couple was killed when their car was shattered early Saturday, Feb. 10, in a head-on collision with a dump truck on Highway 57 in front of Southern Door Schools.

Pronounced dead at the scene were Michael W. Harris, 27, and Shelly L. Dukes-Harris, 28, both of 25 E. Pine St., Sturgeon Bay city. The collision was the first traffic fatality for Door County this year.

The accident occurred at 7:46 a.m. on Saturday in dense fog and on a section of highway that was icing and slippery, said Sheriff Charles Brann. Because of the fog, visibility fluctuated between a couple of inches and one-quarter of a mile, Brann said.

Harris was driving his wife to work at a Brussels cafe when the accident occurred, according to his mother, Barbara Hamilton, who lives in Sturgeon Bay. The car was southbound when it slid across the centerline on an icy stretch of

Highway 57 near School Road in Gardner, according to a preliminary investigation by sheriff's deputies. It collided with a northbound dump truck driven by Eugene J. Therrien, of Sturgeon Bay.

The impact of the collision threw Michael and Shelly Harris from their car, shattered the vehicle and scattered debris over 400 to 500 feet of roadway, Brann said.

It was not known, and Brann said he did not think it could be determined from the wreckage, whether the Harrises were wearing seat belts at the time of the collision.

The Harrises were transported to a Green Bay hospital, where an autopsy was completed and their bodies were prepared for transportation to Chicago for burial. The couple had resided in northern Illinois until about 14 months ago, when they moved to Door County. She worked as a waitress and he worked for a cleaning service in Sturgeon Bay.

Therrien, the truck driver, was transported to Door County Memorial Hospital, where he received treatment for minor injuries and was released. Therrien's truck, carrying a load of sand, crossed the highway after the impact and came to rest

against a power pole near the intersection with School Road. No charges were filed in connection with the accident.

Deputies closed the stretch of Highway 57 for about 5½ hours, in order to safely remove the victims and investigate the accident. With help from the Brussels-Union-Gardner Fire Department, the BUG First Responder Unit and State Highway Patrol, the deputies detoured vehicles away from the site, along County Highway H and School Road. Traffic was slowed down but not stopped.

The detour remained in effect until about 1:30 p.m., while deputies studied the site, made measurements and conducted their investigation.

Firefighters used flares as much to make themselves visible as to warn oncoming motorists to slow down for the accident site and for the turns onto and off the detour. Except for the fog, Brann said, motorists encountered no difficulties.

Icy conditions played a role in at least three other traffic accidents that occurred in Door County from 1:15 a.m. to 7:46 a.m. on Feb. 10. No one was injured in any of the other accidents.



# Suffering 'just beginning'

## Parents face crushing loss of 3 children

By Karil Van Boxel  
Press-Gazette

Despite their grief, Steve and Shirley Thomas soothed the mourners who came to comfort them this week after a car accident killed their three children.

"Their suffering is over," Steve said. "Ours is just beginning."

The siblings — Stephen Jr., 26, Allouez; Stacie Lynne Kopchinski, 24, Portage, Mich.; and Stephanie, 17, Allouez — died after a pickup truck slammed into their car on an icy Door County road.

They were on their way to spend the day after Christmas with their grandmother at Door County Memorial Hospital in Sturgeon Bay.

The only passenger in the car to survive was Stacie's husband — Randy Kopchinski, 26.

Stephen and Stacie were killed immediately, and Stephanie, a junior at Southwest High School, died the next day at St. Vincent Hospital. Her classmates kept a vigil Monday night at the hospital.

"Those young kids don't know grief," said Shirley, who was comforted by their hugs. "For them, life goes on forever."

But it ended too soon for the Thomas siblings.

On Wednesday, Steve and Shirley told stories about the three people who loved each other but acted like typical siblings — teasing and kidding each other. "They were the best kids you'd want to meet," Steve said. "They were caring and compassionate."

Stephanie was "our social butterfly," he said. "She wanted a convertible in the worst way, but the bottom line is she had so many close friends, someone always gave her a ride."

Stephen Jr. had just bought a new snowmobile but only drove it once, said his wife, Lisa. They married a year ago on her 25th birthday, and were remodeling the house where she grew up.

Kopchinski said Stacie loved to dance. They met as students at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens



Press-Gazette photo by Ken Wesely

Sharing their pain: Stephen and Shirley Thomas, rear, comfort their son-in-law, Randy Kopchinski, 26, and daughter-in-law Lisa Thomas on Wednesday. Kopchinski was injured in the accident that took the lives of the Thomas' three children, Stephen Jr., 26; Stacie Lynne Kopchinski, 24; and Stephanie, 17. Inset: A 1991 portrait captured the family.

Point and had lived in Michigan since their marriage two years ago.

Stacie was a "nanny with a wonderful outlook on life," who was loved by the children she cared for, her father said.

"There was no doubt she would have been a good mother," her husband added.

The Thomases are praying for the surviving occupants of the pickup truck, Patrice Bley and her daughter, Emily, 3, who have been released from the hospital. Patrice's husband, Alvin, 38, died in the crash.

Shirley and Steve Thomas also were touched by those who are helping them through their ordeal, from hospital personnel to friends.

"People we don't even know who helped or stopped or did what they could," Steve said.

And through her pain, his wife offered a bit of advice:

"Be sure to tell everyone to hug their kids and tell them you love them. You don't know when you won't have them."

► Crash site dangerous/B-1

## Memorial fund

In memory of the Thomas siblings, a scholarship fund has been set up at J.C. Penney, where their mother worked.

Stephen and Shirley Thomas will allocate the money.

Send donations to Thomas Scholarship Fund, J.C. Penney Co., Port Plaza Mall, Green Bay, WI 54301.

# Taxpayers: Moving school costs s



Press-Gazette photo by John Robb

## ■ They say more state aid will mean raising other taxes

By Jeff Kleinhuizen  
Press-Gazette

Ka Youa Kong will pay a stiff price for the American dream of home ownership.

Kong, a job specialist, and her husband, Teng, a car dealer, bought their first home in August. The Green Bay couple's first property tax bill will be about \$1,700.

She wants property tax relief.

To provide that, the Legislature has enacted a law that will raise the state's share of education spending to two-thirds of the typical school district's budget in 1996-97. That's up from roughly 40 percent now.

But Kong and other taxpayers say they don't

## Inside today

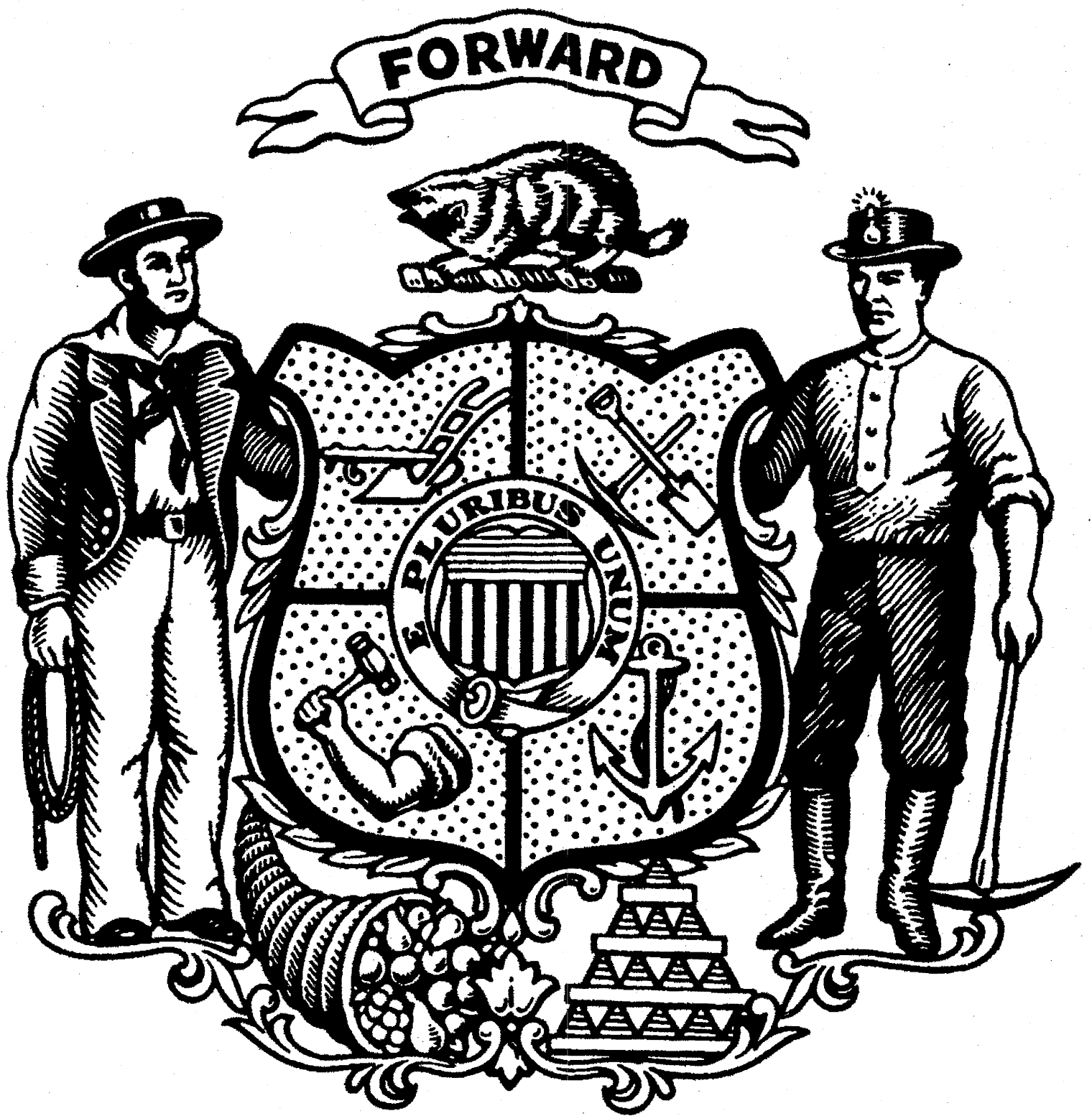
● Two Brown County neighbors have much in common, but they part company on which school districts they prefer/A-2

● A breakdown of how the local school systems are spending your tax money/A-2

Walden Brown County

Sales taxes? Too regressive for most.  
Income taxes? Most feel they're already paying enough.  
Business taxes? Could hurt the economy, but the cost of goods

END



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